

# THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL



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## **THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL**

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# THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

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### SOLILOQUY, 1958

Do not accuse me of this lost beauty.  
I neither created nor destroyed  
The terrible suffering I avoid.  
I am sorry if I am guilty.

I only see the soothing pity  
That shines in the understanding eye  
Of the clinician as I sigh,  
I am sorry if I am guilty.

Had Hamlet had such sympathy  
From his father's ghost, he might have found  
Peace in his time and lived his round,  
Sorry only that he was guilty.

Oedipus could have saved his city  
And self as well had he learned to deal  
Prudently with the oracle,  
Sorry only that he was guilty.

I am sorry for Antigone,  
Who had no choice. Now if we lose  
The middle way we still may choose,  
Worried only at feeling guilty.

Do not accuse me of my morality.  
Prudence and sympathy shift with the crime,  
And there is always another time.  
I am sorry if I am guilty.

Samuel Moon

## TWO POEMS

## Ritual

I feel the touch of fresh-turned earth,  
soft as a field mouse—and the color,  
lying on my back at twilight  
in a furrowed field. I hear  
peent, peent in a parabolic sky,  
high-pitched cry of the nighthawk.  
Catching a sun I no longer see,  
silver swathed, he soars. Darting  
down in darker air, wings folded:  
wide-spread thrum bass as he pulls up:  
throaty like the bellow of a dying bull  
his resonant boom resounds. On out-  
spread wings white ovals, eyes,  
probe. Earthbound shadows shoot up,  
an ever widening wedge: light fades.  
I wait for dark and think of an old saying  
I have heard and half-believed, embraced,  
fringed with a child's cherished fear,  
"Don't fall asleep in the field  
or the bullbat will pluck out your eyes."  
I wonder, whose eyes project my wonder,  
socketed in the nighthawk's wings.  
Are those my father's eyes? I ask  
like Isaac, silent on his gathered fagots,  
seeking an answer through the ritual of fear.

Robert Meredith



## Haypress

Sweet sorghum lies curing  
in the arched oast of summer,  
acres of sun, rain, elements of earth  
grown in serial hours and days  
winnowed out of space and time:  
interstices of empty stubble.  
Surface sway, sea that surged in June,  
undermined by the mower's sweep,  
is stilled.

Windrow ridges curve across the plain  
like sand when wave-tossed tides  
withdraw.

Water and green are gone,  
gold of summer sun is shrunk in stems,  
stored against December's darkened day.  
Bull rakes fork up  
rolls of golden carpet, mounds of muted motion,  
bear them on high to the press,  
where fields are funneled in,  
further furled in bales and bound:  
ten acres to be stacked in the barn.

Next winter the horse  
who walks in a circle,  
driving the press,  
will stand motionless in his stall  
with a hundred miles cross-country  
coiled in the loft above  
and cows will munch on filaments of sun  
pulled from the manger,  
glowing gold in the darkened barn.  
A boy will build a hay bale house  
to while away a dreary day,  
and sitting in a high hay chamber,

chewing memories of summer,  
musing on the smell  
(twice as sweet for their compression),  
will, loosening the tight wire of memory,  
unfurl a summer field.

Robert Meredith

## TWO POEMS

### Faith of our Fathers

Of the faith of our fathers roaming the sacred wood  
Alive to the promise of birch and the menace of yew,  
Only credulity lingers, neither the search nor the  
    clew.

Gaily the Druid mistletoe is misunderstood;  
No magic hellebore, nor sprouting wand  
No ritual dolmen stirs our modern mind;  
We laugh with uncertain mirth at our ancient fears.  
Even our sacred God (an amalgamation of powers  
Into a single One, or at most a Trinity) roars  
Through His spangled nebulae into our stony ears.  
When shall we feel again akin to the loon,  
To the leaping fish, to the mouse caroling the moon?  
Remember that we are merely a singing phrase,  
Perhaps a pause, in the infinite cadence of days?

Blanche A. Price

## Outer Space

Among the swinging citadels of silent stars  
Through Perseus, the Pleiades and the Great Bear  
Around the spangled orbits of familiar planets  
Between the towers of light in cold, shrill air,  
Cutting the Milky way with jeweled scimitars,  
We seek Him, the First among the constellations.

For He lives only partly in our muddied world  
Where we arrange His attributes, enchain His wonder  
Everlasting to our mediocre tenets.

He lives beyond the thunder with the thought of  
thunder

Crashing in His mind. He thinks of rhythms swirled  
On Being, ordered progress, parturient vibration.

His sceptor is His will. Decision is His word.  
All that is, the universe, the rock, the man,  
From starry spaces to these human parapets,  
Was once abstraction, calculated dream and plan.  
Beyond our small religions, naïve or absurd,  
God thinks the abstract into Adam's jubilation.

Blanche A. Price

## ON KNOCKING A HUGE ANT INTO THE FIRE

His look was black, unnatural, obscene,  
But he would now live insolent and whole  
Had I more vividly foreseen  
His curl and wither on the coal.

Conrad Hilberry

## THE APTERYX (1/35) OF WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY, —AND NEW ZEALAND

The inflected apteryx (or kiwi) would appear  
To be a rudimentary, an essentially  
Webster-bird. The apteryx (from the Greek *a* +  
*Pyteryx*) does not fly, and, in fact  
Lacks all regard (and need) for flight.

Flat-breastboned, hen-sized and scratchy,  
The apteryx stands on two, declining  
And unlikely chicken-legs. It ooou's for food  
Through a long, thin, reed- like beak:  
Insects, snails, crippled fleas and berries.

The nostrils of the apteryx  
Are at the last half-inch of its beak.  
And the bird—not quite extinct—survives  
Under government protection. It reproduces  
Slowly, and in public, burrow- hiding.

If its hairs were feathers, ocellated,  
Aphrodisiacal, the sleepy- marginal- asterisk-eyed  
Apteryx . . . could (conceivably) strut, cock  
And play the peacock; however, with its one hint  
Of a tail, and grayish, short shag-brown hair

The apteryx would seem content to ooou. And,  
Its beak alone, apt & straight, endears one  
To it;—but when it curls itself, extinct  
Within its sleeping- back (by day),  
Enwhiskering its ooou, the apteryx returns  
Upon the government and Webster of it all.

Robert S. Sward



## THE BONFIRE

The last tin-soldier melts; the bonfire flares;  
He sweats great silver drops, has lost his head,  
Will soon be nothing but a pool of lead,  
And we are listless after so much joy:  
How slowly we recall those gloating stares  
From siege and plunder of a mimic Troy!

For as the pasteboard ramparts warp and burn  
With flames pale in the sunlight, as the men  
We set to guard their gates sink once again  
Into the shape of nothingness, we feel  
The ichor to our mortal limbs return  
Where huge as gods beside the fire we kneel.

J. E. M. Lucie-Smith

## THREE POEMS

### Delire des Profondeurs

In the deeps, depths, sea's night of noon,  
In the slow-motion silent sliding slip  
Of weed, wash, fish, in the night motion  
Heavy with fathoms' lapses from the sun

The diver in the black clasp of his ocean  
 Flares instantly lit like a salty god  
 In delirium. Breaks free as flame  
 From the pearl or plan or message of his mission;  
 May hand a shark his helmet, lose his name,  
 Cut the earth's cord. . .

while far far far above

Light lights the sea's blue pleasure—  
 Boat, sky, sun; the hissing swans of foam.

Love, love, these depths we seriously measure  
 All unprotected, the chart has showed  
 Unsounded. Yet so far our trove  
 Comes up, our precious blaze of treasure.

Josephine Jacobsen

### **Persephone This Morning**

Persephone this morning broke the sod  
 Broke on the grass in blossom and delight  
 Broke out of bitter black to green the grass;  
 Morning delight and blossom Persephone brought.

Grass, flowers dazzled her Dis-dark look  
 Persephone dazed by the daisies' eyes  
 And glance of grasses in the bright wind's web;  
 Blaze of the dew dazzled escaped Persephone.

Out of her throat birdsong broke  
 Under blue over green Persephone ran  
 Sky blue grass green birds in the branches;  
 Persephone ran, with Pluto beneath.

Josephine Jacobsen

**The Stranger and Corrigan**

I asked Corrigan about the man, alone at the wood's  
edge,  
Who stood in shadow ; the motionless stranger,  
He did not stir or speak, and he bore in his face and  
eyes  
The marks perhaps of terrible cold and certainly  
hunger.

I had come through the journey alive, and into the  
field  
And the sun would have warmed the dead and made  
them answer ;  
And I saw the way he stood, and his coat, and hands.  
A stranger returned from this trip is more close than  
a brother.

So I spoke the word of the way, and he answered  
once ;  
But he never moved or came through the windy  
flowers.  
And I said to Corrigan, "He is one of them  
But he will not smile or speak—only watches the  
mowers.

"The field will be gone," I said, "while he stands and  
looks—  
Tell him I am one—though I went, it is true, in  
summer."  
But Corrigan would not question him and the  
mowers moved  
Bright in the glitter of grasses, toward the newcomer.  
"Bitter and strange, I agree, in summer as in winter ;  
But different in winter. Also," Corrigan said,  
"Tell me, when you went, and lived, and returned—  
Did you travel alone, and without bread?"

**Josephine Jacobsen**

## MONTROYA'S BESTIARY

# La Mariposa

has four wings  
to mock the seraphim.  
It will be found a choke of brightness  
shattered, caught, in the radiator of a car,  
and a smear of gold powder pressed  
in the asphalt on Candelaria road.

## El Gorrión

never migrates, never sings.  
In small brotherhoods it spins all seasons  
from curb to curb on ash-blank wings,  
not always avoiding the smash of wheels.  
On Lead and Iron, at Fourth and Gold,  
it is busy in the gutters, rattling  
empty peanut-sacks to find no crumb forgotten,  
stepping into fragrant popcorn bags  
to find a greasy emptiness.  
It pierces cigaret-butts with its bill  
and eats the stale tobacco.  
It chirps. The sounds it makes  
for pleasure and for pain  
are indistinguishable.

## La Paloma

lives on the flat roofs  
of the Albuquerque National Bank,  
the Federal Courthouse, and the Sunshine Building.  
Dragging his wings in the dust the male struts  
and swells his sleek, soft, feathered sex;  
the black and purple female squats on debris  
of eggs fallen from a nest  
hidden in the red clay roof-tiles.



Songs say the dove speaks love,  
y canta cu-cu.  
But these are the sweet songs  
of another country.

### **La Trucha**

is a fish from whose rose flash  
and glittering repose the heights  
of the Sangre de Cristo take their name.  
Agents of the Interior Department plant them,  
in thousands, in the old trout-streams  
and in the drainage canals,  
from which they are fished out, in thousands,  
by Rocky Mountain Fresh Fish of Los Angeles,  
and by sportsmen from west Texas and Dakota,  
whose glass rods bend like whips.  
It is served skinned-out and fire-dried  
in the Liberty cafe, with cole-slaw,  
and brown slices of a shrivelled lemon.

### **El Venado**

of all antlered cattle,  
men agree is prettiest,  
with his delicate nose, proud mouth and graceful neck,  
his soft pelt the color of fifteen-cent tokay.  
Multiplied, his luminous, dark-sorrowing glass eyes  
look down from the walls of Charlie's Bar,  
La Casablanca and the Golden West.

### **El Buey**

is eunuch to his kind,  
helplessly false friend to the brave bulls.  
His strength deprived of its heat,  
he is yoked to servitude.  
His horns are mounted in his hide  
to hang in offices and clubrooms

in Minnesota, Carolina, and the Hilton Hotel.  
Men say, in Córdoba,  
in Trampas, Truchas, Peña Blanca,  
that when San Ysidro knelt in the furrow to pray,  
an angel came to him from heaven,  
and ploughed the land with his oxen.  
But these are old men  
who have never left the mountains  
called Sangre de Cristo.

Suzanne Gross

## TWO POEMS

### The Breeze Speaks . . .

You delicate boy on the branch,  
you who whistle for wind  
to roughen the weather, when  
will you see the tree you have climbed  
is for me? The swaying branch  
dividing you now cannot hold  
forever. Know, dear boy, the wind  
cannot abide to keep you  
where you ride. So why not ask  
for quiet skies, a chance  
to take wisdom awhile and grow green?  
Where would your world be  
if everyone stayed up in a tree?  
Climb down to the ground, hold on  
to your cap. I'm a breeze today,  
but whispered to by the God of wrath:  
finish it! Cut the earth in half!

Neil Weiss

**Summer**

Summer: the sparkle haze on the water,  
as if a god dropped golden needles.  
Current swirls when it rains,  
bubbles burst and face is wet.  
Earth turns and groans as it turns.  
The heart is not made for pain,  
but is a thing as any other.  
Come lie with me here, and we will weave  
and wait for the hill to waver.  
But summer bit through a stalk  
and snapped it. The first blast  
of heat blew out the sodden door,  
warped and tilted up the cabin floor  
and we woke up in the soaking grass.  
We saw the roof begin to dance  
in air that prodded, burst and swore.  
Bedding was damp. Nothing was better  
than running fast into the water.

Birdcalls lasted into night,  
weeds dried on the floor,  
and it rained petals outside  
until my mouth was sore  
with a kind of mothwing fiber edge.  
Nothing was better  
than running fast into the water.

**Neil Weiss**

## COAST ENDYMION

Ellis could never sleep when the moon was full;  
The sea was of him, he was of the sea,  
And like the sea he yielded to the moon  
That lifted mammoth tides in him and brimmed  
His mind to wakeful fervor once a month.  
He lived surrounded by the changing tides  
On a spruce-clad island of Penobscot Bay  
Whose evergreen treetops in the full moon's light  
Yielded a monthly harvest like the tree  
That blossomed by the side of the River of Life  
In Saint John's vision on lone Patmos Isle.  
The granite boulders on indented shores  
Forgot their hardness, and the flooding coves  
Monthly received new blossoms from the sky.  
Full moon was more than Ellis Hood could stand;  
While others slept he roamed about the shores,  
Over high cliffs and through the dark spruce woods,  
Hunting for something lost out of his life,  
Something the moon might one day help him find.

In any crowd one recognized Hood's beard  
As one would recognize an ominous ring  
Around the moon the night before a storm:  
Coal black, it gave his penetrating eye  
A look of fierceness like the face of Jephthah.  
His sinewy muscles bulged and shone out through  
Blouses and shirts, and rippled to small waves  
Tight fitting yellow oil-skins when it rained.

He shod his feet in red-grained cowhide leather  
After his friends had changed to rubber boots,  
Stood in his wherry rowing from trap to trap  
While his neighbors sped to theirs in motor-boats.



The fumes of gasoline exhausted him,  
And the *took-took-too-ruks* of the little engines  
Were morning insults to his sensitive ears.  
He would not let his wife destroy a fly,  
Saying, like some old Hindu Jainist of India,  
“They have as much right to live as any of us.”

Each Sunday he strode up the chapel aisle  
Dressed in a stiff white shirt without a collar,  
Accompanied by his solemn helpmate, Alice,  
Who hid her face behind a black lace veil  
As if her pilgrimage were endless mourning;  
And if the sermon was about the moon  
That once stood still in the Valley of Ajalon,  
His heed to every word was so attentive  
It brought a hush upon the worshippers.

At fifty-nine the moon had worn him out,  
As his self-centred, domineering ways  
Had worn out Alice and her seven children;  
And when the harvest moon of late October  
Rose from the eastern sea that fall to plague him,  
The roots of trees that rose above the turf  
Had grown to be intolerable burdens,  
Hence he was forced to sit for hours and gaze  
While Maine's October night air drilled his bones,  
Night air that ushered in pneumonia,  
And brought him to his bed in sullen rage.

Two daughters made their mother sleep at night  
While they kept vigil with this later Jephthah  
Who roamed himself the island woods and cliffs  
Bewailing his long-standing feud with sleep.

He grew delirious in mid-November,  
And stories of his raving reached the village.

The white November moon waxed more and more,  
But he was not so wasted with disease  
That earth's lone satellite would mitigate  
Its fatal charm upon his tired brain;  
And when the chill November moon had reached  
Its ultimate fullness he jumped out of bed,  
With superhuman strength from some deep source,  
And scrambled over the rocks like one gone mad.  
He stretched both hands out toward his cup of doom  
As if to break its seal and gulp its gold,  
And like Li Po who, drunk with too much wine  
And a poet's love of beauty, reached for the moon  
And perished in a stream it glorified,  
Our Ellis reached emaciated hands  
And stretched them toward the moon with piteous  
    longing,  
Taking his leave of earth in its embrace.  
Unlike Li Po, he knew not what it was  
That monthly tore his tortured soul apart,  
Drenched though he was in its persuasive power;  
To him it was no "thing of joy forever,"  
This force he could not fathom, nor resist.

Wilbert Snow

He smiled, not having to breathe,  
But stiffened, then, remembering the Colonel,

To whom he must affirm  
That he had less than no excuse to lie  
Alone, in a carven bed, to hear a woman weep,  
To fade in and out of his open eyes,  
And see a forest, blazing, in the teeth  
Of a cock's-combed, motionless flame,  
Turned down, to bother no one while he slept  
In its fluted veil of glass.

James Dickey

### MOTION: A PRINT

Above, a single pinetree tops  
The hill explicit clouds deny  
That rises, where the village stops,  
Against the flat, omitted sky.

Out from a bamboo waterfront,  
Across a world that has four sides,  
A peasant, in a kind of punt,  
Poles, and the gray, real water glides.

John N. Morris

**CHAGALL**

Chagall came striding  
Out of sullen Russia  
In his beggar's sack he has  
Violins and roses  
Lovers lighter than angels  
And tramps in frock-coats  
Musicians and archangels  
And synagogues

He has meadows and villages  
That capsize in the storm  
Cabarets balls beautiful ladies  
Windows in a rainbow

The lily-covered throne of the Betrothed  
Under a purple silk dais  
The whole Bible in images  
All the great people  
With long beards long robes  
And their sheep and their doves  
Variegated cocks and cows  
La Fontaine's animals and those of the Ark  
Crowds weddings tears kisses  
Fanciful horses  
Knights and ladies  
And circuses

## CHAGALL

Chagall est venu à grands pas  
De la Russie morose  
Il a dans sa besace  
Des violons et des roses  
Des amoureux plus légers que des anges  
Et des mendiants en redingote  
Des musiciens et des archanges  
Et des synagogues

Il a des prés et des villages  
Qui chavirent dans l'orage  
Des cabarets des bals des belles  
Des fenêtres dans l'arc-en-ciel

Le trône de lys de la Fiancée  
Sous le dais de soie empourprée  
Toute la Bible en images  
Tous les grands personnages  
En longues barbes en longues robes  
Et leurs agneaux et leurs colombes  
Des coqs diaprés et des vaches  
Les animaux de La Fontaine et ceux de l'Arche  
Des foules des noces des larmes des baisers  
Des chevaux chimériques  
Des dames et des cavaliers  
Et des cirques



He has painted the whole universe  
Nothing is missing there  
With all colors of the sun  
Dancing in it

Then he has a Christ stretched out  
Through the lost world  
In a great ivory space  
A candlestick at his feet lighted  
Inadvertently with six candles  
And in the sky disconsolate men  
Watching

At the four corners of the horizon  
Fire and flames  
Poor Jews go away from everywhere  
No one claims them  
They have no place left on earth  
To rest not a stone  
The wandering Jews  
They must take refuge in the sky  
Dead or alive  
With these friends of Chagall  
Who are so bad off down here  
Who are always in the air in the clouds  
Those pensive rabbis  
And those violinists  
Who play the accordion in the snow

Raissa Maritain  
translated by Charles Guenther

Il a peint l'univers entier  
Rien n'y manque  
Avec toutes les couleurs du soleil  
Qui y dansent

Puis il a un Christ étendu  
A travers le monde perdu  
Dans un grand espace d'ivoire  
A ses pieds un chandelier allumé  
A six bougies par mégarde  
Et dans le ciel des hommes éplorés  
Qui regardent

Aux quatre coins de l'horizon  
Feu et flammes  
De pauvres Juifs de partout s'en vont  
Personne qui les réclame  
Ils n'ont plus de lieu sur la terre  
Pour se reposer pas une pierre  
Les Juifs errants  
Il faut donc qu'ils logent au ciel  
Morts ou vivants  
Avec ces amis de Chagall  
Qui ici-bas se tiennent si mal  
Qui sont toujours en l'air dans les nuages  
  
Ces rabbins pensifs  
Et ces violonistes  
Qui jouent de l'accordéon dans la neige

## JOURNEY

Dusk changing window to mirror, the woman rode beside herself on a ridge outside the train, linked to a row of unreal passengers, their naked faces pensive. Travel-strain unites us all, she thought. Does each return from strange to known, as I? "Your ticket, lady?" His question failed to reach her. As the engine raced towards foothills curved on fading apricot sky, she was lost in a spangled world discarding space to chart its predictable path. "Your ticket, lady!"

"The first conductor took it." "Then the next stop is yours," he said. "No, I go farther on." "How far? Where to?" He sighed. "Have another look."

She heard the whistle whimper like a hound running with night— "I'm sorry, I was wrong." He punched the cardboard; "Watch it if you plan to go beyond the next stop." Odd sort of man, mumbling about the next stop, his blue stare intense. She licked her lips. Does he mean to tell me the train may choose a new direction there.

Jocelyn Macy Sloan

## APPLICATION

Consider gentlemen,  
 Since I have tried them all already, tried them all,  
 Have measured out my verses in  
 A beautiful perning gyre,  
 Lushed and trimmed 1 ounce Y and 2 T S E  
 A little Lawrence cut with Dylan in a Canto  
 Till the force that through the quick pun  
 Burned a fusion  
 Between elison and illusion  
 Was fit for the Brooks boys.

I have placed in a certain *Little* of distinction  
 A cummulative of extra-ordinary force from  
 Heaven

all  
     the  
         way  
             to  
                 Hell  
             and  
         then  
     back  
 up

Again.

Likewise another *Little* magnificiently defunct  
 (That used to publish  
 onetwothreefourfivepoems justlikethat)  
 Used a poem of mine once which

melded meaning magnificiently and  
joyful

-ly got two pages in

*Explanation* which showed

That Hell-and-Heaven is a crux.

And what I want to know is [switching back to  
prose]:

Am I not ready for a Guggenheim?

Marion Montgomery

## A SENSE OF SIN

Under the house was inside of the world,  
that tangle of pipe and wire where Nature worked  
her juices of supply, evacuation—

the strands and arteries, the acrid groin.  
Such play was serious: we wormed under,  
earthbound. Above, the toilet flushed like thunder.

No dirt was dirtier: nails, splinters, bottles  
threatened, and spiders laced the ways of hell.

Oh, we were seekers; sissies stayed behind

never to breathe dark air, the chill within.

A sense of sin required us so to suffer  
what sin itself impelled us to discover.

Judson Jerome



## TWO POEMS

## Omen (1957)

*Red disk and copper sun sparked  
but a smile on Mussolini's bullets;  
while spears, butt-end first in the dust  
of Abyssinia's bones, could serve as markers  
for the heathen dead.*

*But that was long ago.*

Now we have a lioness casting bones.

On Oman

Land,

the British drums loom large  
on rebel shields. The English queen  
(God save her) looks prettily.  
Ghalib's a brick in Abadhiya's mud.

But no marching Tommy Atkins will ever say  
(not even Cameronians) tis good to die  
when grapes have turned  
rich purple with the warming  
prayer and chant. No man of vision  
will think that. Not one who counts  
his due from birth.

Not one!

Yet here tis summer;  
 the muscat seed but a fluff in its pod.  
 This is not war!

This is no war where withered males  
 taunt blithe determination  
 tooth-&-nail, their testacles  
 shrivelled in death. Their minds  
 burned to a speck, blowing  
 hand in hand with a thousand heaped feet  
 of sand blown solar spectrum high.  
 The laugh of liberty's lost: the laughing  
 in a fiery mouth stinking of trinity  
 has chewed of too much antelope.

Perhaps then love is not so weaned on hate;  
 perhaps the love is burning, consuming,  
 anti-cruelty with fire and fear;  
 yet against sadness too. Against life  
 and its sad unreasoned movement.

Yet we have advanced  
 from fish to man.

*the queen the queen the english queen  
 I have nothing against the queen . . .*

No, *Dieu* sits and spits fire with fire:  
*mon droit* is might all swashed in red,  
 the symbol of a running life.

From dust we came; and therefore wrong  
 to whisper into tantamount ears:

might's right!  
 and Saxon banners woof to the blind  
 (we are the stalwart strong!);  
 cast on high Sinai's Mount;  
 our purpose lofty, and flags

held high to the ontogenetic glory  
of our Lords, our swords; and Peers,  
sweet fears on an innocent lie:  
the turbaned Moslem's but a dog  
lucky with a jackal's fate;  
and *Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

Ah, but the wolf, in the old story, was best  
brought out to light when an arrow,  
once put to flight, was shot into the sea.

Yet here we have the seed of the muscat  
only a fluff in its pod. Godallmighty  
sits on the throne.

Christopher Perret

### Elegy For The Golden Bird

When fire was closely on the sun  
I spied a little golden bird  
and thought of its comparison  
to landscapes and the bison herd  
trampled by cities stone on stone.

I watched the outline of a girl  
unfurl her hair upon a comb  
till darkness buttoned on the world;

then where she'd stood, bereft of gold,  
the little bird toppled to earth,  
there lifeless lay and never told  
why generations mocked its birth.

The moon banged shutters like a moth

and overwhelmed me with a fear,  
mantled my heart and drew me forth  
into the lonely hemisphere  
where force is turning wheel and mill.

I watched the clay-birds and young boys  
with rifles cocked and aimed to spill  
the dust-blood in a world of toys;

upon a little wooden mare  
a girl rode round and round the world,  
she called the moon and furled her hair  
into a little golden bird.

*the bird to stone:  
the bone unearthed*

Christopher Perret

## FOR THE BRIDE

Already you have come alone  
To humanness of tears,  
To a joy that rises  
And the fears shattering  
Like panicked birds  
That plummet into stone.  
Already you have known  
The black cat buried  
In the bush, the still bird

Bloodied on the wing,  
The feathered furry deaths  
That are your own.

Still where the great trees  
Wear their banded years  
Like bracelets on the arm,  
Where light and darkness  
Lace and mingle unalarmed  
Veiling the mystery,  
Come we silently and move  
Within the sacred shadow  
Winged, haunched and hooved  
Between the living trees  
Rooted, stemmed and petaled  
In the meadow.

Then to your crossroad  
Where I let you go  
I kiss your lovely brow  
Godspeed, Godspeed  
And gift you with the secret  
Paining joyfully.  
Step slow, awake, aware  
As you begin nor doubt  
That which I know.  
The journey is  
As lovely as the Inn.

**Ruth Finer Mintz**

## THE HUNTER

The October dawn was shuttered  
Against his scrutiny by locks of vapor  
Through which he saw the promise of form  
Defined in tattered  
Glimpses. He pursued red deer  
In forests of this body, relishing the charm  
Of chase against high odds.  
The crash of undergrowth, his dogs' excited  
Yelps, a taut bow twanging,  
Quick, whispered words,  
The hunters' crunching footsteps greeted  
By the crust of frost, the crust dissolved in singing  
As the mist rose—those noises  
Rang in his blood, blooded him for the kill.  
At noon the others called to him  
To stop; their voices  
Barely reached him; he ran in a spell  
Into sharp, secret thickets, lost, beyond them,  
Pursuing a perfection of prongs.  
The sun was plumb-straight, dripping hot gold;  
It sent its quick eye into the cypress  
Grove, found springs  
In their young glitter, arrogantly cold,  
Unveiled the limbs of crumbling alders, leprous,  
Altered in the light.  
Then—stillness; far off the blooded hounds bayed  
After an elusive beast. Water  
Refracted the bright  
Sunrays into his eyes, bled  
Him of will; obeisant as the trees, he saw her:  
A white, quivering shaft,



Perceptive as an arrow in the bow,  
She stood, breasts vulnerable  
And downy as the white  
Snow-rabbit in a nest of snow.  
Her nipples watched him like the eyes of a captured  
seal.

Once, on his hunter's belt  
Had hung a red fox killed after hot chase;  
Its glossy fur, as red as apples,  
Was the color of her pelt.  
But none of her was like her eyes:  
They were without color; they drank him sapless.

Water roused him. "Go now,  
Tell if you can that you have seen a goddess  
Nude!" He stepped toward her,  
Stumbled, knew  
That he was not to reach across  
That unpolluted moat, that vestal water.

From the dank grass where  
He lay, he tried to lift and turn his head;  
His neck felt as thick as the trunk of an oak,  
Rigid. In anger  
He shouted for his dogs; the glade  
Circled him in silence like a hawk.

He shifted, felt his leg  
Tense, lengthen; stretched him arm: rough  
On his bare skin crept the mossy fur  
Of a stag.  
He watched his hand contort to hoof.  
At the same moment, his hunter's eyes saw blur.

He gave one hoarse, hot cry,  
Leaped up with arching strength, amazed at his  
stride,

Then halted at his image in the stream.  
With sick, blurred eye  
He saw his antlered crown displayed;  
Then heard his hounds; and gave his last, sentient  
scream.

Beth Singer Bentley

## INBRED

The flowering crabapple tree, the blossoms  
are beginning to scatter; to the clipped grass  
they sift down.  
They drift as far as the iris bordering the fence,  
fading pink petals, bleached white by the smoulder-  
ing  
sun, and curling to brown.  
Soon they will all be shards, lost into summer,  
forgotten with spring, and the high, sweet scent in  
the air . . .  
The blossoms are shaggy and old, they blanch on the  
limbs; once delicate and fair,  
frail as the breeze, they now drift limp to the  
lawn;  
and from these branches, as from my own, no earthly  
fruit will be born.  
O happier by far must be the unbred root of unpruned  
tree in an orchard, forgotten of men:  
O happy, ancestorless children, producing the yield  
of the earth, the earth will cover my kind. We  
cannot come forth again.

Willis Eberman

## HEELS WEAR DOWN

Michigan Blvd. at 6:00 is risky,  
but he left the walk to hail a cab,  
and sparks undid the cold november curb.

Too much Picasso had me swaying, and  
I shivered as we rode to catch a drink  
"somewhere within an English otherworld"  
because he liked a far-off atmosphere.

Pineapple soaking in a rum, the almond,  
and the never bitter raisin sauce  
pampered the tongue, and we talked poetry,  
and were not once ashamed as men: outrun-  
ning beauty and without a frequent soul  
to bargain with.

I thought it rather strange,  
however, he should be annoyed that I  
had sermonized how stars came from his shoes  
and broke the night. He found a deeper vein  
beneath my careless parable than I  
had counted on.

"Just cleats," he said, "my heels  
wear down too fast." He had the master's knack  
of flattening with words.

"And so does ale—  
shrimp curry—and the spirit" (now I felt  
my way into the homily).

"Let's not  
have God tonight." He dulled my pulpit plan.  
Then looked at me and spoke with louder eyes

than voices from Picasso.

Paid the check.

And hailed another cab which brought us to  
a public reading of his poems; not  
so bright as sparks that briefly warmed or died  
along the curb.

Raymond Roseliep

## LYRIC

So brief the browse of bee  
within the flower's cuff,  
whom shall I say has called,  
and how sweet the bluff?

He cannot have referred so much,  
he could hardly have been  
humming had he had his fill  
of honey under the skin.

But I guess a skimming burr  
takes enough of me with him  
that he can let the flower be  
after I rose to the brim.

Gil Orlovitz

## THE METAMORPHOSIS OF LOVE

## I

Please don't let your round eyes search me  
For the sense of smile I cannot give;  
I have seen the blue of them turn green  
And halos of hilarity, those pinks, grow gray.

What has grown still is still the evil  
The form of love would wear,  
And my fast tongue is full of silence  
And cannot praise your quality of tears.

I am turned turtle, and back into my being,  
From stoic into stone;  
For pleasure which lips once would whistle  
Is formal, external and nearly bone.

Let your mouth marshall as much of loops  
As circle hell in a word,  
And we count down the rings and go  
Gravely—while lesser dragons stay—

Towards our walk-down with pull-bell,  
Mated 'horses, a saltwater flat;  
For publicly I drown within your person,  
And somewhere under Sea, a shell.

## II

Coyness as ever quicksand clasped the prancing feet of  
stallion

Conceals that tongue precisely where  
—In rings of stamped flesh, lips of sand, much  
mouth—

A circle of the slowly sinking figure  
Eyes the distance and the depths,  
Strikes precision from the air, and drowns.

Around whose border dust of daisies hangs

Like some suggestion of the tree-frog,  
—Since sequence of symphony bears outward  
Sound without measure, baseless sound—  
And all moves on muted Irish harp of song  
Into silence. Though at last the sand  
Gives with the spasm, there is a period of face  
And it's discreet.

## III

As long as he and she were one together  
He was one apart;  
The more his mind would reconcile her measure,  
The less his heart.

She said that it was proper to consider  
The final verse;  
Her words were sweet: her words were bitter;  
And even worse

Than double pain was pride of single leisure.  
But even worse  
Than single pain was double pleasure.

## IV

Love is like an architect of spruce that's evergreen,  
And plants the final form within the seed.  
But spruce is like a green love on the whiter scene  
That's penalty of interest in a warmer need.

## V

Soft there on that seething surf!  
Lash no more the star-sailor.

Islands of encumbered dream  
No soul's spinnaker, hope blown



May beat toward, tonight.

Upon the tide changing sands  
Lydia looks up and sees  
Arched and graceful wings of gull  
Hold high the ravenous hard beak.  
Lydia coils. And sands her warm shell enclose  
Sink there; but rising skyward to the West  
Make rookeries where even albatross and hawks may  
nest.

From that vagrancy her swift soul keeps  
Far travelling sands, bear Lydia out,  
For Lydia sleeps.

James Hiner

## TWO POEMS

### Lost

Flashing brief as matchfire, as flame  
in wind, as sparks from flint on flint,  
the darting nightflies veer and glint  
toward me while I call your name,  
toward me while I call your name.

I hear the unstalked rabbits flee  
the dark, untrampled fields I pass.  
I wait and wait on a coast of grass  
for the night to yield you like the sea,  
for the night to yield you like the sea.

Samuel J. Hazo

## Prey

While grizzlies trundle from cool caves to scowl  
bearwise to windward where the gibbons rage,  
and monkeys, dangling by prehensile tails,  
trapeze in panic at the panther's growl—  
the child ogles, cage by cage,  
bewildered as a startled clown.

The elephants loll hulking in their dung,  
twitching their hides in place against the fleas.  
The child laughs behind the laddered bars,  
is boosted, balanced on the topmost rung  
to pitch his peanut at their knees  
cylindrical and bulged by bone.

Tensely the condors roost in driftwood crags,  
their beaks like blunted scissors clamped secure,  
their eyes death-wild between the hooding wings.  
Flocked in the dark, they hunch like famished hags.  
The child sidles with his fear  
away—and to the stairs—and down.

Samuel J. Hazo

# THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

Volume 8 - Number 4    Summer 1958

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- |                        |                                                 |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1 SAMUEL MOON          | <i>Soliloquy, 1958</i>                          |
| 2 ROBERT MEREDITH      | <i>Two Poems</i>                                |
| 4 BLANCHE A. PRICE     | <i>Two Poems</i>                                |
| 5 CONRAD HILBERRY      | <i>On Knocking a Huge Ant<br/>into the Fire</i> |
| 6 ROBERT S. SWARD      | <i>The Apteryx</i>                              |
| 7 J.E.M. LUCIE-SMITH   | <i>The Bonfire</i>                              |
| 8 JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN   | <i>Three Poems</i>                              |
| 10 SUZANNE GROSS       | <i>Montoya's Bestiary</i>                       |
| 12 NEIL WEISS          | <i>Two Poems</i>                                |
| 14 WILBERT SNOW        | <i>Coast Endymion</i>                           |
| 17 ANNE SEXTON         | <i>Didn't Know</i>                              |
| 18 JAMES DICKEY        | <i>Joel Cahill Dead</i>                         |
| 19 JOHN N. MORRIS      | <i>Motion: a Print</i>                          |
| 20 RAISSA MARITAIN     | <i>Chagall</i>                                  |
|                        | <i>translated by Charles Guenther</i>           |
| 24 JOCELYN MACY SLOAN  | <i>Journey</i>                                  |
| 25 MARION MONTGOMERY   | <i>Application</i>                              |
| 26 JUDSON JEROME       | <i>A Sense of Sin</i>                           |
| 27 CHRISTOPHER PERRET  | <i>Two Poems</i>                                |
| 30 RUTH FINER MINTZ    | <i>For the Bride</i>                            |
| 32 BETH SINGER BENTLEY | <i>The Hunter</i>                               |
| 34 WILLIS EBERMAN      | <i>Inbred</i>                                   |
| 35 RAYMOND ROSELIEP    | <i>Heels Wear Down</i>                          |
| 36 GIL ORLOVITZ        | <i>Lyric</i>                                    |
| 37 JAMES HINER         | <i>The Metamorphosis of<br/>Love</i>            |
| 39 SAMUEL J. HAZO      | <i>Two Poems</i>                                |

